

# Strategy Research Project

## The Coast Guard's Critical Role as an Armed Service

by

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United States Army War College  
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**USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT**

**THE COAST GUARD'S CRITICAL ROLE AS AN ARMED SERVICE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

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As the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Coast Guard continue to evolve and adjust to a post-9-11 world, it has caused some to question the Coast Guard's need to continue as an active member of the armed forces. Although the multi-mission aspects of the Coast Guard are still respected and valued, in an environment where mission requirements outnumber available resources, the Coast Guard's non-Homeland Security-centric missions can appear to compete with or distract the agency from the core missions and interests of the Department. Yet there are distinct and specific advantages that DHS realizes by having the Coast Guard serve as an active member of the armed forces. The benefits, authorities, and advantages gained by DHS in support of national interests by supporting and maintaining the Coast Guard's status as a member of the armed forces are worth the additional costs and burdens born by the Coast Guard and Department to maintain that status, even during the current decremental and austere budget environment.



## THE COAST GUARD'S CRITICAL ROLE AS AN ARMED SERVICE

Throughout the Coast Guard's impressive 221-year history, it has served with distinction under the Departments of Treasury, Transportation, and now Homeland Security. Since its first days as the Revenue Cutter Service under the Secretary of Treasury, the Coast Guard has proven itself to be "Always Ready" to meet the maritime threats and challenges facing our nation. As those challenges and threats have evolved and changed over time, so has the scope and breadth of the Coast Guard's authorities, roles, and missions. Though many of its authorities have aligned well with those of the department under which it served, as the Coast Guard has matured and evolved, it has always had significant statutory authorities, missions, and responsibilities that have fallen outside of the principal jurisdiction of the department to which it was assigned.

Although the multi-mission aspect of the Coast Guard has always been recognized as one of its greatest strengths, in a constrained budget environment, the Coast Guard's divergent authorities and activities can appear to compete with or distract it from the principal missions and interests of the Department of Homeland Security. This is often true of the Coast Guard's participation as a member of the armed forces in support of Department of Defense (DOD) missions.

This paper seeks to address the following general research questions: what are the specific advantages that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) realizes by having the Coast Guard maintain its status as an active member of the armed forces? And what National interests are served by having one of the five armed services

positioned outside of the Department of Defense, particularly within the Department of Homeland Security?

This research paper examines the national strategic importance of the Coast Guard maintaining its active armed forces status and the synergies and advantages realized by the Department of Homeland Security as the Coast Guard exercises those authorities and serves in that unique capacity.

### Literature Review

Most of the published research material available addressing the Coast Guard and its military status speaks to the Coast Guard's diverse mission sets, its eleven statutory missions, and the value the Coast Guard brings to the Nation as a multi-mission, maritime, and military service. The *National Security Strategy* and supporting strategies address how collectively the maritime services must address the challenges and threats facing our nation's vast maritime domain. Some discussion is available on the unique maritime competencies and niche law enforcement and maritime security roles the Coast Guard provides to DOD in support of its maritime missions. Other literature discusses the value the organization brings to DHS in advancing the nation's maritime domain awareness and maritime border security efforts in concert with other federal agencies within the interagency. Surprisingly little is found, however, on the Coast Guard's unique contributions to the Department of Homeland Security by being an active member of the armed forces and why those authorities and activities are so valuable and critical to its success and mission accomplishment within DHS.

Since this study seeks to assess the value the Coast Guard's unique status as an armed force brings to DHS, though there is some quantitative evidence to inform the discussion, the relevant information available is almost exclusively qualitative.

## Thesis

As the Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard continue to evolve and mature in a post-9-11 environment and the scope and scale of the Homeland Security missions continue to increase, the constrained budget environment has caused some to question the Coast Guard's need to continue as an active member of the armed forces. Although the multi-mission aspects of the Coast Guard are still respected and valued, in an environment where mission requirements outnumber available resources, the Coast Guard's non-Homeland Security-centric missions can appear to compete with or distract the agency from the core missions and interests of the Department. As an example, the 30-page 2011 DHS White Paper on the U.S. Coast Guard, which outlines the Coast Guard's diverse authorities and responsibilities to further the safety, security and stewardship of our Nation's waters, only mentions the Coast Guard's military status three times and only briefly discusses its overseas contingency operations with the other armed services.<sup>1</sup>

This concern over non-Homeland Security related missions in a constrained budget environment is exacerbated by the Coast Guard's strong desire to complete the acquisition and construction of the three remaining National Security Cutters (NSC) which, in addition to critical maritime Homeland Security missions, would enable the Coast Guard to continue to support DOD and Homeland Defense missions as required around the globe. These major cutters, however, come with an expensive \$700M price tag. In addition, Homeland Defense and Homeland Security missions in the Arctic, which include "strategic sealift, strategic deterrence, maritime presence, and maritime security operations; and ensuring freedom of navigation,"<sup>2</sup> could require sustained or persistent independent operations in the Arctic. The Coast Guard's quickly atrophying

icebreaker fleet is the Nation's only current answer to this problem set. Yet acquisition, design and construction of a new icebreaker would require up to 10 years and close to \$1B to complete.<sup>3</sup> Those who would argue for the Coast Guard to move away from its long-standing responsibilities as an armed service might also point out that, in addition to the major vessel requirements described above, the Coast Guard's status as an armed force is also expensive from a technology and human resources standpoint. The systems required to maintain military operational interoperability as well as the pay, benefits and retirement systems required to maintain parity in the personnel resources domain carry increasingly hefty budgetary requirements.

Though these discussions and arguments for a move away from the Coast Guard's proud history of military action are natural and in many regards healthy, they are often made without a full understanding of the significantly synergies and complementary nature of the Coast Guard's role as an armed force and its statutory responsibilities within DHS. There are significant advantages and windfalls realized by DHS and the nation at large by having the nation's Coast Guard also be military. There are also unique national interests served by having one of the five armed services positioned outside of the Department of Defense, particularly within the Department of Homeland Security. The benefits, authorities, and advantages gained by the Department of Homeland Security in support of National interests by maintaining the Coast Guard's status as a member of the armed forces is worth the additional resources and opportunity costs borne by the Coast Guard and Department to maintain that status in a post-9/11 America.

## The Coast Guard's Unique Evolution

As the oldest continuous seagoing service, the Coast Guard has a unique and impressive history. Its lineage and historical exploits help explain the unique character and qualities of the agency that has been so closely tied to the nation's strategic interests since its creation. Founded as the Revenue Cutter Service in 1790 under the Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, "to regulate the collection of duties imposed by law..." the Revenue Cutter Service was provided ten vessels for the protection and collection of customs revenue, the enforcement of trade laws and the prevention and interdiction of smugglers.<sup>4</sup> In 1915 it would be combined with the U.S. Life-Saving Service and renamed the U.S. Coast Guard. Over the next three decades, the Lighthouse Service, the Steamboat Inspection Service, and the Bureau of Land Navigation would be added to its ranks and authorities.

The national maritime defense roles for the Coast Guard are as old as the service itself and have always been complementary to its law enforcement and maritime security authorities. Although the Revenue Cutter Service under the Department of the Treasury was primarily responsible for the enforcement of taxation laws and the interdiction of smugglers along the young nation's coasts, in the absence of a federal navy, which was not reestablished until 1798, the Revenue Cutter Service served coastal defense functions in addition to commerce protection.<sup>5</sup> In his book, *Guardians of the Sea*, Robert Erwin Johnson articulately lays out the Coast Guard's rich naval history. In 1799 Congress authorized the President to order some or all of the Revenue cutters to serve under the newly established Department of the Navy. Anticipating this legislation in 1789 President John Adams placed the cutters at the disposal of the Secretary of the Navy and eight of them fought alongside their navy counterparts in the

Quasi-war with France. The Revenue cutters were distinguished in naval combat, capturing fifteen French war ships, aiding in the surrender of five others, and rescuing and recovering no fewer than ten U.S. ships that had been captured by French naval forces.<sup>6</sup>

The Quasi-war was just the beginning of a long and distinguished record of combat operations. Revenue cutters served alongside Navy gunboats in 1807, enforcing President Jefferson's embargo on the foreign slave trade.<sup>7</sup> In 1819 the Revenue Cutter Service patrolled with the Navy to interdict and defeat pirates operating off the south Atlantic coast, the western Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. Revenue Cutter Service vessels, under the operational control of the Department of Navy, also participated in each of the subsequent naval wars, including the War of 1812, the first Seminole War, and the Mexican War. The Revenue Cutter Harriet Lane fired the first naval shot of the Civil War during the attack on Fort Sumter, April 13, 1861.<sup>8</sup> And eight Revenue Cutter ships served proudly in the Spanish-American War in the Blockade of Havana and the Battle of Manila Bay and other naval battles.<sup>9</sup>

After becoming the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915, the service would continue to participate in every war up to and including the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Having shifted to the Department of the Navy during World War I and World War II, the Coast Guard saw substantial operational action in naval convoy escorts, anti-submarine warfare, combat amphibious landing craft operations, and port and coastal defense. In World War I the Coast Guard sustained the highest percentage of losses of any of the U.S. armed services.<sup>10</sup> During WWII over 231,000 Coast Guard men and women served, and in addition to sustained naval combat operations, Coast Guard ships and

aircraft rescued over 2,500 survivors of torpedo and convoy attacks and saved another 1,500 during the Normandy operations by 60 Coast Guard patrol craft specifically assigned those duties.<sup>11</sup> Coast Guard men and women served in naval escorts, search and rescue and riverine operations during the Vietnam and Korean Wars, and continue to serve in the Arabian Gulf in the aftermath of Iraqi Freedom and the continuing war in Afghanistan.

Although the Coast Guard remains the nation's maritime "first-responder," a law enforcement organization, and a regulatory agency, both U.S. Code Title 10 and Title 14 also stipulate that it at all times is an armed force of the United States.<sup>12</sup> After ten years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Coast Guard still operates six Island Class patrol boats in the Arabian Gulf performing a wide spectrum of maritime operations including maritime escorts, offshore oil platform security, critical infrastructure protection, and the training of Iraqi naval forces. Port Security Units (PSUs) provide maritime security for military out-loads at Special Ports of Debarkation. Coast Guard members have recently deployed with the U.S. Army's Redeployment Assistance Inspection Detachments (RAID) to support the shipment of containerized cargo and hazardous materials in and out of war zones. Coast Guard Port Security Units deployed to the Middle East with Naval Coastal Warfare Squadrons to support point defense and harbor security operations in Kuwait. Several hundred miles away, Coast Guard Visit, Board, search and Seizure (VBSS) teams embarked on U.S. Navy ships assigned to Combined Joint Task Force 151 in support of Horn of Africa counter piracy-missions. Although the nation's military chapter in support of Iraqi Freedom is drawing

to a close, Coast Guard assets continue to be a valuable tool of the Combatant Commander in the region.

In further support of DOD global missions outside of the war zone, in 2011 Coast Guard Cutters BERTHOLF and ESCANABA participated in DOD Northern Edge training exercises in the Gulf of Alaska<sup>13</sup> and UNITAS, a SOUTHCOM multinational naval exercise in the South Atlantic.<sup>14</sup> Supporting U.S. Africa Command, Coast Guard Cutter FORWARD completed a three and a half month deployment to West Africa conducting extensive joint maritime training and operations with the naval forces of Cape Verde, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Gambia as a part of SOUTHCOM's Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership (AMLEP) program. Coast Guard Port Security Units (PSU) and Maritime Safety and Security Team (MSST) detachments continued port security operations in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to provide force protection during detainee military commissions. USCGC MELLON, a 378-ft High Endurance Cutter, deployed for five months to the waters of Southeast Asia in support of U.S. PACOM's Cooperative Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) security cooperation exercises, conducting maritime exercises with Brunei, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia.<sup>15</sup> Coast Guard cutters and Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) deployed to the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific Ocean combat illicit trafficking under the operational control of SOUTHCOM's Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF-S). In addition, the service also has members assigned in support of each of Combatant Commanders' operations in their respective regions of the world. In each of these locations the Coast Guard brings its unique competencies, assets, and authorities to further defense operations and objectives.

## Statutory Foundation

The statutory foundation for the Coast Guard's identity and service as an armed force is robust and sound. As mentioned earlier, both Title 10 and Title 14 stipulate that the Coast Guard is a military service and branch of the armed forces at all times. Title 14 U.S. Code further outlines the primary duties and authorities of the Coast Guard and requires the service to maintain a state of readiness to serve as a specialized service under the Navy in a time of war. 14 U.S. Code section 89, in addition to identifying the Coast Guard as the nation's primary maritime law enforcement agency, also authorizes Coast Guard personnel and assets to deploy and operate in support of major combat operations, humanitarian assistance operations, and efforts to combat terrorism. U.S. Code Title 14 section 141 further authorizes the Coast Guard "to assist the Department of Defense in the performance of "any activity for which such personnel and facilities are especially qualified."<sup>16</sup> And finally, U.S. Code Title 10 section 379 authorizes Coast Guard personnel to perform law enforcement duties, including making searches, seizures and arrests from appropriate naval vessels.<sup>17</sup> The Coast Guard is unique amongst the U.S. armed services, however, in that it is not restricted by the Posse Comitatus Act, U.S. Code Title 18 section 1385, which limits the use of military personnel in domestic law enforcement actions.

Upon these broad statutory authorities, a collection of documents provide national policies, strategies, tactics and procedures that guide and govern the Coast Guard's Defense operations and coordination. The *2010 National Security Strategy*, the *National Defense Strategy*, the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* and other instruments of national policy outline the broader objectives and strategic ends of Coast Guard defense operations. A

*Cooperative Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Seapower (CS-21) and the Naval Operations Concept 2010*, both signed by the Marine Corps, Navy, and Coast Guard, outline when, where, and how the U.S. naval forces will contribute to enhance national maritime security, prevent conflict, and prevail if the nation is drawn into war.<sup>18</sup> A 2008 memorandum of understanding (MOA) between the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security detail the National Defense capabilities of the Coast Guard and the processes by which the Coast Guard provides those forces in support of Defense missions. The *2006 National Fleet Policy* aims to strengthen Navy-Coast Guard cooperation through the tailored integration of the two service's multi-mission assets, personnel and infrastructure.

#### Advantages, Benefits and Synergies

As one reviews the Coast Guard's service to the nation as an active member of the Armed Forces, clear advantages, benefits and synergies for DHS and the nation emerge.

*A More Capable, Integrated Federal Response.* The Coast Guard serves as a critical link between the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Defense in the inextricably linked execution of maritime Homeland Defense, Civil Support and maritime Homeland Security missions. Even as Coast Guard patrol boats patrolled alongside U.S. and Iraqi naval forces throughout the night of August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005 in the northern Arabian Gulf, Coast Guard helicopters and small boats worked aggressively and tirelessly as a key component of a coordinated federal, state and local response in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina along the Gulf Coast of the United States. During that operation alone, the Coast Guard rescued over 33,000 lives. Acting

with national distinction in both areas of the world the Coast Guard clearly demonstrated its unique ability to lead decisively in both wartime and peacetime crisis environments. When those two scenarios are drawn together and DOD resources are brought to bear in a Homeland Defense or Civil Support role, the Coast Guard's leadership experience and interoperability with both military and civilian agencies naturally allow it to play a critical bridging leadership role.

The Coast Guard's competence and experience as a maritime component of joint military operations is substantial. The Coast Guard's Atlantic and Pacific Area Commanders concurrently serve as Commanders, Defense Force East and West. Before assuming his position as the current Atlantic Area Commander, VADM Parker served as the Director of Security and Intelligence for U.S. Southern Command in Miami, Florida. A Coast Guard admiral serves as Deputy J-3 at U.S. Northern Command. The Coast Guard's 17th District Commander headquartered in Alaska also serves as the Joint Naval Component Commander for the Alaska maritime region. Joint Interagency Task Force-West (JIATF-S), a subordinate command to U.S. Southern Command, responsible for the detection, monitoring and interdiction of illegal trafficking and narco-terrorist threats in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific,<sup>19</sup> is commanded by a two-star Coast Guard flag officer. Joint Interagency Task Force-South (JIATF-W), subordinate to U.S. Pacific Command and serving a similar function in the southern and western Pacific, is also commanded by a Coast Guard admiral. And finally, the Coast Guard served as the Maritime Component Commander for Joint Task Force-Haiti under U.S. Southern Command in 2004, serving to support stability operations by ensuring the maritime security and restoration of commercial and humanitarian vessel traffic into key

Haitian ports.<sup>20</sup> Aiding this integration, the Coast Guard's military command and control structure, communications, weapons systems, and much of the operational training, techniques and procedures are interoperable with their military naval counterparts.

In addition to its significant integration within the military construct, the Coast Guard also has the experience, local support, infrastructure and networks to coordinate the resources and people of other organizations in local and regional responses.<sup>21</sup> Because the Coast Guard operates in every corner of the United States' maritime realm throughout its Captain of the Port regions, it is routinely engaged in multi-agency operations, exercises and training that lays the foundation for immediate and effective leadership and coordination when man-made or natural disasters strike. The Coast Guard's multi-mission nature has caused it to embrace interagency cooperation with a wide variety of federal, state and local partners which over the years has become a keystone of the Coast Guard's identity. This engrained culture combined with its expert knowledge and proficiency in the national interagency response system known as the Incident Command System (ICS) naturally allows it to take leadership in directing and coordinating responses to a full range of incidents, from small-scale localized incidents to large-scale national responses to catastrophic events like Hurricane Katrina or the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Although DOD maritime assets generally do not work alongside non-DOD maritime responders other than the Coast Guard, the 2006 Memorandum of Agreement between the secretaries of Defense and Homeland Security concerning DOD support to the United States Coast Guard for maritime Homeland Security might create a scenario where they must do just that.<sup>22</sup> The memorandum outlines the DOD capabilities, roles

and functions that could be rapidly transferred to the tactical control of Coast Guard forces in response to and in support of maritime Homeland Security operations. As the Coast Guard leads and coordinates effectively in both the military and civilian communities, it develops joint experience, expertise, tactics, and standing operating procedures (SOPs) that enable effective communications and interoperability with both military, government, and civilian partner organizations. Under the above construct Coast Guard forces could serve in critical leadership positions within the ICS structure for federal, state, and local response while being lead federal agency for the maritime component supported by the U.S. Navy. In that capacity the Coast Guard would play a critical bridging role between U.S. military and other response organizations, integrating the full range of federal, state and local responders.

The Center for Naval Analysis provided the following comments concerning the Coast Guard's value to the nation as a coordinator of maritime response organizations:

[The Coast Guard] provides essential services... and it bonds, focuses and coordinates disparate actors, ensuring that the job gets done. This quality is unique among federal agencies and is not duplicated in government or private institutions. No other agency has the breadth of responsibility; existing authority; varied skill set... international and domestic web of contacts, partnerships and working relationships; or the predilection for cooperation and coordination, or is as result-oriented.<sup>23</sup>

Given the ambiguous line that potentially exists between Homeland Defense operations and Homeland Security operations, as well as the likelihood of federal, state, and local resources being brought to bear during an actual major threat or event, the Coast Guard's operational experience and interoperability with partner military and civilian organizations could play a significant role in facilitating and enabling an effective unified response effort.

*Homeland Security's Vital Link to the World's Maritime Partners and Authorities.*

The Coast Guard, due to its military status, is a key link to partner maritime forces around the world critical to DHS' efforts against illegal immigration, illicit trafficking and the war on narco-terrorism. The preponderance of naval forces around the world are much more similar in size and authority to the U.S. Coast Guard than to the U.S. Navy. Because of this, foreign navies routinely request and receive Coast Guard training in law enforcement, search and rescue and other Coast Guard mission sets. Each year Coast Guard Training and Technical Assistance Teams out of the Coast Guard's Training Center in Yorktown, VA travel to approximately 60 countries and train over 2,500 international students on Coast Guard operations and tactics.<sup>24</sup> International cadets from partner nations around the world attend the Coast Guard Academy, and each year more than 200 students representing over 75 nations attend formal courses at Coast Guard training centers and are assigned to receive follow-on on-the-Job training at operational units around the country.<sup>25</sup> In addition, over the last two decades, Coast Guard cutters have also deployed with Navy battle, strike, and expeditionary units conducting subject matter expert exchanges and training with smaller foreign navies who are much more willing to accept a Coast Guard white-hulled vessel in their ports than their grey-hulled U.S. Navy counterparts.<sup>26</sup>

As the world's tenth largest naval force,<sup>27</sup> the Coast Guard is viewed as a peer and partner to many of the world's naval forces, encouraging and facilitating partnerships that become valuable operational force multipliers. These relationships and partner nation exchanges pay significant dividends when executing U.S. Coast Guard and Homeland Security missions near their waters. Because of the trust and

operational partnerships developed through this training and these exchanges, and the reputation the Coast Guard has built as a premier maritime law enforcement agency and military service, over two dozen nations have signed bilateral maritime agreements with the United States granting the Coast Guard authorities and access to enter their territorial seas and/or air space in order to exercise law enforcement authorities within their sovereign waters or on their flagged vessels. Other agreements provide international shipriders to facilitate law enforcement actions within their territorial seas. Not only do these nations' maritime services benefit from the Coast Guard competencies and experience in developing and supporting their own maritime security posture, they also become better working partners with the United States in furthering our own efforts to address transnational threats to our Homeland.<sup>28</sup> The Coast Guard's unique status as a military force as well as a law enforcement agency gives the Coast Guard a unique international standing that facilitates a higher level of international cooperation and acceptance that directly leads to operational and jurisdictional access and benefits for the Department of Homeland Security.

*A Stronger U.S. Expeditionary Maritime Force.* The Coast Guard's interoperability with the Navy as an armed service enables a complementary partnership in the defense and security of the global commons; maritime domain awareness; and the detection, monitoring, and elimination of potential maritime threats that advances both Homeland Defense and Homeland Security ends and objectives. Guided by the *National Security Strategy*, and linked across to the *National Strategy for Homeland Security*, the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* opens with the premise that the safety and economic security of the United States rests in large part upon the

secure use of the world's oceans.<sup>29</sup> More than 80 percent of global trade and more than 90 percent of containerized cargo travels by sea.<sup>30</sup> Should adversaries take advantage of global maritime vulnerabilities to disrupt the flow of maritime trade, it could have disastrous consequences for global and U.S. political and economic security. As the *National Strategy for Maritime Security* articulates, "in addition to the potential for major combat operations at sea, terrorism has significantly increased the nature of the non-military, transnational, and asymmetric threats in the maritime domain that the United States and its allies and strategic partners must be prepared to counter."<sup>31</sup>

The March, 2006 expanded Navy-Coast Guard National Fleet Policy therefore calls for a fleet of aircraft, vessels, and command and control centers that are affordable, adaptable, interoperable and possess complementary, but not redundant, capabilities.<sup>32</sup> This combined Navy-Coast Guard fleet is designed with integrated and compatible command, control and communications systems as well as weapons, engineering and training systems that allow the National Fleet to have the capability and capacity to support the full range of U.S. Homeland Defense and Homeland Security mission requirements. The full cooperation and integration of the complementary capabilities of the maritime military forces ensure the highest level of maritime readiness for our nation.<sup>33</sup> It not only provides depth in wartime tasks, but also in peacetime missions, homeland security and crisis response.<sup>34</sup> The synergistic nature of the National Fleet makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts.

Examples of this are clearly seen in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific where Coast Guard and Navy assets are continuously on patrol in support of Coast Guard and U.S. Southern Command's JIATF-S' efforts to detect, monitor and interdict potential

Homeland Defense, Homeland Security, or law enforcement threats or violations. Because of the Coast Guard's unique status as a military service as well as a law enforcement agency, it has statutory authorities to deploy Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs) to U.S. Navy vessels and allied warships globally to enforce U.S. and international law. This is particularly valuable deep in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific where LEDETs aboard Navy ships significantly enhance the Coast Guard's law enforcement presence and maritime security reach deep into the trafficking transit zones.

Another example of this synergistic partnership is the U.S. Navy sailors and Coast Guardsmen that participate routinely in combined visit, board, search and seizure (VBSS) tactics, operations and exercises. These exercises are conducted to help meld the two forces into a highly effective maritime security teams, specializing in their particular areas of expertise.<sup>35</sup> The combined VBSS teams are a critical and versatile tool in the Homeland Security and Homeland Defense tool bag.

The Coast Guard and Navy have also established fully integrated maritime operations centers to maximize maritime domain awareness and better coordinate joint maritime operations.<sup>36</sup> Manned by both Coast Guard and Navy watchstanders, the Joint Harbor Operation Centers (JHOC) detect, monitor, and track all vessel movements, critical infrastructure, key national assets, and waterways through a robust system of radars, port cameras, infrared cameras and other sensors that are strategically placed throughout the port.<sup>37</sup> This information is synthesized and monitored 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The JHOC watchstanders provide notifications and assume tactical control and coordination of federal responders and law enforcement units

responding to suspected or actual maritime security incidents.<sup>38</sup> The Coast Guard's complementary partnership with the Navy in Homeland Defense pays significant dividends in advancing and furthering Homeland Security's own strategic and operational ends and objectives.

*A Stronger, more Capable Coast Guard.* Because the Coast Guard is a member of the armed forces, the Department of Defense provides the Coast Guard critical weapons systems, training, and communication networks that are dual-purposed and optimized to support Homeland Security missions. The U.S. Navy provides equipment, funding and support for the major weapon systems on the Coast Guard's High and Medium Endurance Cutters as well as its patrol boat fleet. The Navy also provides communications equipment related to the Coast Guard's defense readiness roles as well as the encryption necessary to operate secure communications. The service also leverages the Navy's Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E) personnel and facilities for major cutters and aircraft, including the National Security Cutter and the Coast Guard's HC-130 fleet.

In addition, due to the Coast Guard's military status, it has personnel embedded with Navy Training Commands conducting training and evaluation of Navy and Coast Guard vessels and their crews. Coast Guard NSCs and High and Medium Endurance Cutters routinely train with these training groups to ensure the crews possess the required war fighting and damage control standards and competencies necessary to engage in the full spectrum of military and Homeland Defense missions. The teams also ensure the material readiness of the cutters. The training and competencies

obtained in the effective use of shipboard weapon, navigation, and damage control systems are critical to the service's effective operations across all DHS mission sets.

The Coast Guard's military connections also allow it to leverage new technologies currently being developed by its DOD counterparts and apply them to Homeland Security mission sets. A couple of these projects include vertical takeoff and landing unmanned aerial vehicles and standoff radiological and nuclear detection equipment. The funding, systems, equipment, technology and training received by the Navy in support of defense missions enhances the Coast Guard capability, competence, and capacity to respond to the wide range of maritime Homeland Security threats and missions. Absent DOD's support, the Coast Guard would have difficulty finding alternate sources of supply for the heavy weapons, training, equipment, and expertise. The Coast Guard's budget would also have difficulty absorbing the substantial financial burden associated with funding subject equipment and services.

Harmonistic with the theme of a stronger, more capable service, the Coast Guard's military status has also served to draw support from the Senate and House Appropriations Subcommittees on Defense in the form of new multi-mission assets and resources that can significantly enhance Homeland Security capacity and capabilities. As a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, the Coast Guard has received funding, assets, and authorities through House and Senate Defense Appropriations and Authorization Committees that it did not receive through its traditional DOT or DHS authorization and appropriations committees.

Just in the last three years alone, \$253M has been appropriated through Defense Appropriation bills for the acquisition of new or refurbished aircraft for the Coast Guard.

In the 2010 Supplemental Appropriations Act, \$174M was appropriated to the Air Force for the acquisition, missionization and sparing for two new C130Js to be transferred to the Coast Guard once acquired.<sup>39</sup> The same bill also appropriated \$15.5M to the Coast Guard directly for the acquisition of a navy HH-60 helicopter to be refurbished as a replacement aircraft for one lost in operations the previous year.<sup>40</sup> The FY2012 Military Construction Bill, House Resolution 2055, included \$63,500,000 for the Air Force to be transferred to the Department of Homeland Security, Coast Guard, "Acquisition, Construction, and Improvements" for the acquisition of a new C-130J aircraft.<sup>41</sup>

Although relatively small when compared to the organic Coast Guard funding received through regular DHS appropriations, the Coast Guard's ability to attract and receive support through House and Senate Defense Appropriations and Authorization Committees has substantially benefited not only the Coast Guard, but also the departments under which the Coast Guard was serving.

*A More Flexible, Surge-Capable Service.* The Coast Guard authorities as an armed service allows it to support and maintain a Coast Guard Reserve force that is critical to the organization's ability to surge in response to national security threats, operations, or in response to natural or manmade disasters. Since its creation during the throws of World War II, the Coast Guard Reserve has played a critical role in the Coast Guard's ability to successfully complete its missions and capably man the watch. The Coast Guard's Reserve forces are a surge capability that the service consistently relies upon in order to meet the growing and dynamic demands of Homeland Security operations. Since 9/11 the Coast Guard has activated its reserve force at five times the

rate that it did prior to September, 2001, due to the Coast Guard's continued high operational tempo.<sup>42</sup>

And yet this authority to train, equip, allocate, and maintain a Reserve Component stems from its World War II operations and authority as an armed force of the United States, and is unique amongst the agencies within the Department of Homeland Security. With over 8,000 reservists, matching almost 20 percent of the Coast Guard's Active force, the additional capability that it provides is substantial. This unique authority allows the Secretary of Homeland Security to activate Coast Guard reservists in response to manmade or natural disasters and is a critical component of the Department's ability to surge with a fully equipped, trained and ready Reserve force.

*Increased Intelligence Access and Sharing.* The Coast Guard's armed service identity and unique relationships within the interagency allow it to serve as a full and active member of the National Intelligence community, critical to multiple components of its maritime Homeland Security missions and responsibilities. The Coast Guard has sought and leveraged intelligence capabilities since its founding in 1790.<sup>43</sup> The service's fundamental law enforcement and anti-smuggling missions required the generation and utilization of operational and tactical intelligence. Since the 1980s, the intelligence requirements of the Coast Guard, as well as its ability to generate intelligence has drawn it close to other members in the Intelligence Community.

Intelligence collection for the military has always been a critical component of successful operations, and thus the services have always been considered members of the Intelligence Community.<sup>44</sup> On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1976 President Ford defined the membership of the Intelligence Community for the first time in Executive Order 11905

listing thirteen agencies including the “intelligence components of the military services.”<sup>45</sup> Given the Coast Guard’s specified status as an armed force in U.S. Code’s definitions of Armed Forces, as well as in 14 U.S.C §1, this executive order did not preclude the Coast Guard’s membership in the Community. President Reagan’s Executive Order EO 12333 signed on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1981, however, made significant changes to the Community. In addition to granting the Director of Central Intelligence significant new authorities, it removed the Drug Enforcement Agency as a named member of the Community and listed the four other military components by name, excluding the U.S. Coast Guard.<sup>46</sup>

The drive to include the Coast Guard once again in the Intelligence Community as an armed service began in 1998 within the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI).<sup>47</sup> HPSCI Committee staff had visited the Joint Interagency Task Force East in Key West as well as the Coast Guard’s Intelligence Coordination Center in Suitland, MD and became increasingly interested in the Coast Guard’s significant role in the counter-drug and counter-migrant interdiction operations, and its continued Intelligence collection efforts in spite of scarce resources.<sup>48</sup> In the late 1990s, as the Navy pulled away from western hemispheric missions, the Coast Guard’s role in the region and in the interdiction missions along the southern approaches to the nation became that much more significant to the interagency and intelligence community. Though the interdiction efforts of the Coast Guard in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific were drug and migrant centric, the agency and intelligence collection could be effective against smuggling of all types, including weapons, money, high-interest aliens, or even weapons of mass destruction.<sup>49</sup> Since so many of the maritime Homeland Security

threats transit these regions, the Coast Guard's lead and participation in the community as it related to these areas was critical.

The drive to bring the Coast Guard back into the Intelligence Community was revitalized during congressional travel to Haiti and the Dominican Republic in 1999, when Congressman Goss, Chairman of HPSCI, saw the impact and unique role the Coast Guard played in confronting maritime threats against the United States. This understanding was a catalyst and provided new energy to bringing the Coast Guard back into the Intelligence Community as a full and active member.<sup>50</sup> Over the next two years, momentum for the effort grew, and following a number of studies and reports on the subject, Congress and President Bush approved the Coast Guard's full integration into the Intelligence Community as a part of the Intelligence Authorization Act of 2002.<sup>51</sup> The Coast Guard's unique contributions as an armed service and the nation's premier maritime law enforcement agency were critical in that national-level decision, and predates the creation of the Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard's integration therein in March of 2003.

Over the last eight years, the Coast Guard's intelligence program has grown in substance and stature and is accountable to the Commandant of the Coast Guard and the National Director of Intelligence for the activities of its National Intelligence element. The Coast Guard's Cryptologic Group, Cyber Program, Intelligence Coordination Center (ICC), and Area and Field Intelligence units not only inform and protect U.S. Coast Guard assets and personnel, but also support joint, coalition and partner services and agencies defending national and Homeland Security interests.

The Coast Guard's Pacific and Atlantic Maritime Intelligence Fusion Centers (MIFC), created in September of 2003, serve as key conduits for the fusion, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence at the operational and tactical levels. The centers monitor and track events and vessels, and provide intelligence analysis and trends.<sup>52</sup> The two MIFCs also work in close coordination with the Coast Guard Intelligence Coordination Center located at the National Maritime Intelligence Center in Suitland, MD. Co-located with the Navy and other intelligence agencies, it helps integrate and disseminate the information amongst other agencies responsible for security of America's maritime domain.<sup>53</sup> The Coast Guard's critical intelligence roles serve as a bridge that connects the other armed services and other Federal agencies in support of Homeland Security interests and missions. Although the amount of funding and number of personnel are classified, the Coast Guard receives significant funding for personnel and program support to operate and sustain the Coast Guard's intelligence program as a part of the National Intelligence Program. Although the Department of Homeland Security has its own element in the Intelligence Community, the Office of Intelligence and Analysis (I&A), the Coast Guard's unique status and access allows it to feed and contribute to the Intelligence Community in ways DHS I&A would be unable to.

### Conclusions:

America's maritime Homeland Security is challenged by a broad array of nontraditional and asymmetric threats.<sup>54</sup> These range from the smuggling of drugs, weapons and people into the country through the maritime domain to piracy on the high seas, and the proliferation of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear devices that potentially threaten U.S. ports. The Coast Guard's status as an armed force as well as

the nation's principal maritime law enforcement and response organization is a key element of unique value to U.S. Homeland Security as well as the nation at large.

The combination of military and law enforcement authorities and capabilities provides the nation a unique and versatile maritime and naval instrument in the U.S.' national security tool bag. The multi-mission and military efficiencies realized by a single Coast Guard cutter underway in U.S. waters serving not only to ensure the safety and security of the recreational and commercial users of the waterway, but also being available for the enforcement of applicable fiscal, immigration, sanitary and customs laws, the protection of natural resources, the denial of foreign incursions, and defense of our national maritime sovereignty is remarkable. The *Strategy for Homeland Defense and Civil Support* calls for an active layered defense to secure the nation's borders. That layered defense leverages DOD's and the Navy's resources in the forward regions of the world and seamlessly integrates them with the Coast Guard, DHS, and other federal agencies closer to our shores. The Coast Guard's status as an armed force and the interoperability and integration it has gained with other military branches as well as DHS and partner agencies makes it an invaluable resource for DHS as it looks to secure the nation's vast maritime borders.

As the United States continues to develop and refine its Homeland Security capabilities to remain effective and relevant in an ever-changing threat environment, the Coast Guard must be fully prepared to meet and fulfill both its Defense-related and Homeland Security obligations. The technologies, proficiencies and experience gained in preparation for defense-related missions further enhance its competence and effectiveness as an agency within DHS. The Homeland Defense and Homeland

Security capabilities complement and enhance one another. As such, the Coast Guard should consider implementing the following five recommendations.

First, the Coast Guard must continue to pursue technologies, equipment, and assets that are dual-use and able to perform well in both Homeland Defense and Homeland Security mission areas. In this vein, the Coast Guard should proceed with the procurement of its sixth through eighth National Security Cutters (NSCs), at a minimum. The NSCs are the replacement cutters for the Coast Guard's current Hamilton Class High Endurance Cutter and is the only Coast Guard vessel that is capable of supporting Combatant Commander contingency plans, based on the ability to operate in a high threat environment. They are uniquely suited for foreign military and agency engagement in developing partner national security capacity, especially for sovereignty aspects including the enforcement of a nation's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), counter-drug and immigration enforcement, and fisheries and natural resource protection. The NSCs are also outfitted with a classified sensitive compartmented information facility (SCIF) that enables the Coast Guard to fully engage on the Intelligence front, utilizing and providing contributions to that community while achieving maximum maritime domain awareness in order to effectively complete its HLS mission sets. Networked and mobile, the NSCs provide maritime domain awareness and effectively coordinate multi-mission, interagency operations.<sup>55</sup>

Second, as the Coast Guard continues its noteworthy support of Defense operations around the world and plays an increasingly vital role in the integration and execution of Homeland Defense and Homeland Security missions, the Commandant of the Coast Guard should be added as a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The first

of five objectives identified in the 2008 National Defense Strategy is *protect the homeland*,<sup>56</sup> yet ten years of war has kept the focus of DOD on kinetic and stability operations overseas. If Homeland Defense truly is a primary defense objective, then the Coast Guard Commandant should be at the table.

With the Coast Guard's service chief sitting as a full member of the Joint Chiefs, the service's role in Homeland Defense and global maritime operations would be fully integrated with DOD's efforts in those areas. As in 1952 when the Commandant of the Marine Corp was granted co-equal status with the other service chiefs when matters "of direct concern" to the Corps were being discussed,<sup>57</sup> and similarly the Chief of the National Guard Bureau was recently added as a seventh member of the Joint Chiefs, so the Coast Guard Commandant would be invaluable as a full member to address Coast Guard equities and provide solutions sets within the Joint Chiefs. As it stands currently, though he is not a full member, the Coast Guard Commandant attends the meetings of the Joint Chiefs weekly in the "Tank" at the Pentagon, is engaged by his fellow-service chiefs on a regular basis, and is publically included with the other Service Chiefs at National functions and Joint Sessions of Congress. Full membership could pay significant dividends to the Joint Chiefs in allowing the Commandant to help them address and resolve issues relating to the full integration of forces for Homeland Defense, Civil Support, and Homeland Security operations in addition to the integration of Coast Guard forces in support of global military maritime operations.

Third, the Coast Guard should build upon the recent DHS White Paper and embark on an educational campaign to ensure both military and civilian leaders understand its unique capabilities and authorities as an armed service outside DOD.

The Coast Guard is unique, complex and not well understood. Its humanitarian nature, law enforcement authorities and military responsibilities set it apart from almost every agency or organization in the world. The Coast Guard must be simultaneously fully committed to being both military and an invaluable member of DHS. The two must be viewed and understood as complementary, not in competition with each other or mutually exclusive. Interagency leaders must understand the Coast Guard's obligation under the law to execute both its niche military missions and vast DHS responsibilities with the same dedication and operational acumen. The Nation's security depends on it.

Fourth, the Coast Guard should voluntarily adopt Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) level I as a requirement for advancement to O-5, consistent with the other armed services. This requirement would make Coast Guard officers more mindful of the role the Coast Guard plays in support of the National, Military and Homeland Security strategies, and how they complement the other services collectively to form a key and vital national instrument of power. The requirement would also ensure senior Coast Guard officers understand the role the Coast Guard could play in joint military planning and operations. Given the ability to present and facilitate this coursework on-line through Coast Guard or DOD on-line distance learning programs, this requirement is now achievable without substantial resource implications.

Fifth, in addition to the joint training received at the Special Missions Training Center in Camp Lejeune, NC, the Coast Guard should partner with the U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in the training of its high-end Deployable Specialized Forces (DSF). This parity in training, tactics and procedures would not only increase interoperability between Coast Guard DSFs and other DOD specialized forces and

make those assets and their unique special operations capabilities available to SOCOM and Combatant Commanders, but it would also ensure the Coast Guard's high-end deployable forces receive and implement the best practices, techniques and procedures being practiced by U.S. special forces world-wide. It would also ensure and provide for DHS an organic, fully-trained Special Operations capability for Homeland Security as the nation faces ever-changing threats in the maritime environment.

Even as it balances its heavy operational requirements within the Department of Homeland Security, the Coast Guard must continue to fully embrace and pursue opportunities for joint service with its sister armed services when it is especially suited to do so. The full integration of the Coast Guard's military authorities into the wide range of Homeland Security missions and responsibilities is critical to the Department of Homeland Security's ability to secure the nation's maritime borders and advance America's strategic national interests.

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